

PORTABLE HIGH SPEED COMMUNICATION DEVICE PERIPHERAL CONNECTIVITY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 Field of the Invention

The invention relates to a Host Computer system, which receives information, rasterizes it, compresses it, and transmits it to a remote portable device or Personal Computer (PC) system, which decompresses
10 the image to display it on a screen. The result is a cost effective Internet access solution which allows interaction between the device and a Host Computer. It is a further aim of the present invention, to provide connectivity to a variety of Peripheral Devices, such as printers, scanners, etc. The user will also be able to interface with a wide variety of peripheral
15 devices at remote locations without the need for peripheral device driver software installed at the remote location.

Description of the Prior Art

The background of the present invention includes US Patent # 5925103,
20 Internet Access Device, which describes an improved Internet access system, vastly different from the present invention. Other prior art would include palm top computers, hand-held computers and cellular telephones that have limited processing power due to design restrictions. Thus, these computers are much slower for accessing the Internet and World Wide
25 Web. Most prior art does not allow the user to scan and print to a wide variety of peripheral devices from remote locations, without the need for associated software installed in the portable device, as in the present invention.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a portable high speed Internet access device that can access the Internet and World Wide Web as a wireless device, and also interface with a variety of peripheral devices remotely.

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Prior Art has a Web server connected to the Internet. This server contains a virtual browser which takes the image displayed in the browser and converts this image into a bit map which is compressed, and communicates via telephone lines to a cellular telephone. The cellular telephone is connected to the high speed internet access device of the invention commonly referred to as a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) which is comprised of a display screen, battery and related micro-electronics. This enables the PDA to receive, decompress and view the bit map image sent from the virtual browser, and more importantly, through cellular phone connectivity to be able to input data from the PDA directly onto the server. The PDA and cellular phone combination may be replaced by another computer outfitted with a modem. In particular, the Host Computer or server receives vector information or compressed data in the form of HTML, JPEG, etc., which is displayed on a web page. The virtual browser virtually displays a virtual image on the server. That image, in whole or parts, is recompressed and sent to the PDA. The recompressed data format sent to the PDA, is not necessarily in the same format as the compressed data format first received by the server. Another embodiment involves the server receiving vector information such as HTML or text and then rasterizing it to bit map format. It can then shown in memory through the virtual browser and is recompressed through a "loss less" method and sent to the PDA.

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Prior Art also comprises the PDA with an electronic touch screen keyboard, which remains invisible and only appears on a portion of the display screen when called upon by touching the keyboard icon. The entire display screen is covered with a transparent touch panel, which is

5 essentially a matrix array of electrodes, which can detect the location of any pressure points applied to it.

In accordance with the present invention, the Host Computer, which contains an operating system such as Windows NT, has a variety of printer

10 driver software installed to enable printing from specific types of printers via a parallel port, serial port, USB port, or other types of ports. Hence, when a print command is executed, data is sent from the printer driver software to the selected port and is intercepted by another software unit, which may compress the data and subsequently diverts it to the portable

15 device via modem. The particular type of printer dedicated to the printer driver software in the Host Computer is connected to the remote PDA or computer, and the data received may be decompressed if necessary by the remote PDA or computer and sent to the corresponding port. The printer connected to this port would print normally from the portable device

20 using its standard protocol as if it were connected directly to the Host Computer. This same principle is applied to all other peripheral devices that may be connected to standard ports on a computer, whereby the peripheral's driver software is installed directly on the Host Computer. This method allows the user to interface with a wide variety of peripheral

25 devices at remote locations without the need for peripheral device driver software installed at the remote location.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention is described in more detail below with respect to an illustrative embodiment shown in the accompanying drawings in which:

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Fig. 1 illustrates elements in the Host Computer, which communicates with a remote user and the device of the invention.

Fig. 2 illustrates the image to be displayed compared with the displayable area of a browser window.

10 **Fig. 3** shows a typical subdivision of the virtual image to be displayed.

Fig. 4 illustrates file formats received and sent by the Host Computer.

Fig. 5 illustrates the displayable area of the device with respect to portions of the virtual image, which are sequentially decompressed prior to viewing.

15 **Fig. 6** illustrates the portable device of the present invention enabling the user to operate peripheral devices through a standard port or other ports.

Fig. 7 illustrates a computer connected to a modem of the present invention enabling the user to operate peripheral devices through a standard port or other ports.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

To facilitate description, any numeral identifying an element in one figure will represent the same element in any other figure.

- 5 The principal embodiment of the present invention aims to provide a portable device that allows a user to access the Internet or the World Wide Web (WWW), which is a device similar to a palm top computer. It is an aim of the present invention, to offer a cost-competitive device. It is a further aim of the present invention to allow the user to interface with a
- 10 wide variety of peripheral devices at remote locations, without the need for peripheral device driver software installed at the remote location.

- Currently, existing palm top devices such as the Palm Pilot VII and Windows CE type devices contain an operating system, and within the
- 15 operating system a mini-browser to interpret information received from the WWW or Internet and then display this information on the screen. This requires a powerful microprocessor, which is not advantageous in conserving power for portable applications and also minimizing costs.

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- A general description of the Prior Art is disclosed in Fig. 1 with further reference to Patent Applications 09/496,172, 09/501,585, 09/504,809, 09/504,808, and 09/504,807. A Host Computer 1 is depicted which is connected to the Internet, and that host may also be a Web server. Running in the Host Computer, is a Web server program 2. When a
- 25 remote user 3 requests to view a Web page (or electronic message etc.) the Web server software receives HTML, JAVA, or other types of information and transmits this information to another software, the Browser Translator 4. This software translates the information, (i.e. the entire

image comprising graphics and text), received in the form of HTML, Java, etc. (as information may be gathered from different sources) and translates it to a black and white bit map or raster image. In another embodiment, the software translates the information into a raster or color image. The image 5, as shown in Fig. 2, contains the information that would normally be displayed on a single Web page. The translation program therefore, also acts as a virtual browser. As can be seen in Fig. 2, the image 5 to be displayed in a browser window 6 is usually larger than the displayable area of the browser window 6. The cellular telephone 12 of Fig. 1 is connected to the high speed internet access device 18 of the invention commonly referred to as a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) which is comprised of a display screen 19, battery and related micro-electronics. This enables the PDA to receive, decompress and view the bit map image sent from the virtual browser 6, and more importantly, through cellular phone connectivity to be able to input data from the PDA directly onto the server. In particular, the Host Computer or server receives vector information or compressed data in the form of HTML, JPEG, etc., which is displayed on a web page. The virtual browser virtually displays a virtual image on the server. That image, in whole or parts, is recompressed and sent to the PDA. The recompressed data format sent to the PDA, is not necessarily in the same format as the compressed data format first received by the server, as illustrated in Fig. 4. For example, the incoming data from a Web page may be in the form of JPEG which is decompressed and displayed on the virtual browser. This data is recompressed and sent to the PDA but can be in the form of TIFF G4 or other formats, and not necessarily JPEG as initially received.

Another embodiment involves the server receiving vector information such as HTML or text and then rasterizing it to bit map format. It can then

shown in memory through the virtual browser and is recompressed through a "loss less" method and sent to the PDA.

5 The image 5 of Fig. 2 is further divided into sections 7, 8, 9, and 10, as shown in Prior Art of Fig. 3. The image is divided after the bitmap or raster is created. The reason for the division (as will be explained later) is for the purpose of display priority on the user's display. The image 5 is then sent to another program 11 running on the Host Computer 1 (Fig. 1), which compresses the image using a loss-less compression method. The compression method may be group 3 or group 4, or another method. The programs 4 and 11 can have multiple instances running simultaneously on the host server for the purpose of connecting to multiple users. The compressed image, after being processed by program 11, is sent to the user, using a protocol in which information may be broken down into packets.

10 The information is received by the device 18 of the invention in Fig. 5 which has the ability to display a monochrome image 20, in its display window 19. The information is decompressed and displayed in the order of priority such that part of image 7 of Fig. 5, which substantially or completely covers the displayable area 19 of the device, is decompressed and displayed first and then sequentially the portions 8, 9 and 10 of the image are decompressed, and stored in an internal memory of the device to be displayed later when the user scrolls up, down, or sideways to these parts of the image.

25 In further Prior Art, the information received from the server by the device 18 of the invention in Fig. 5 remains compressed, and only the area viewed by the device is decompressed, since the area of a web page to be

viewed is larger than the device's display area. As the user scrolls up, down or sideways, only the parts of the image to be displayed are decompressed prior to viewing.

- 5 A CPU resident in the device therefore has the ability to decompress a bit map or raster image that may be larger than the size of the display and allow the user to traverse this bit map or raster image. The primary method of traversing the image is through conventional scroll bars positioned at the sides of the image. The resident CPU on the device has
- 10 no ability to determine which part or parts of the image that are being displayed represent links to other Web pages, etc. Thus, the translator program 4 (Fig. 1) translates the image in the virtual browser 6 such that the words that represent links on the page 5 (Fig. 2) are translated to be slightly bolder or underlined. The user may therefore consider text that is
- 15 bold or underlined to be links.

In accordance with Fig. 6 of the present invention, the Host Computer 1, contains an operating system 20 such as Windows NT, and has a variety of peripheral driver software 21 installed, to enable operation of these peripheral devices via a standard port 22, which may be a parallel port, serial port, USB port, or other types of ports. The present invention allows the user to interface the portable device 18 with a variety of peripheral devices 24 through a similar port 23 which may be the same as the standard port 22 or a compact version, or a wireless interface. For

20 demonstration purposes, the peripheral device 24 will be a printer connected to port 23 on the portable device. Hence, when a user wishes to print a viewed document on the portable device, a print command is executed by the portable device 18, and a print message is sent to the Host Computer 1, which instructs the Host Computer that a print command

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has been executed by the portable device. The Host Computer 1 initiates the printer driver software 21, which brings up a window displaying various print options for the user to make selections. An image of this window is sent from the Host Computer 1 to the portable device 18 to be displayed on its screen. The user would then click on various parts of the image on the display screen and a message is sent each time to the Host Computer informing of the click locations, and the Host Computer would input these clicks in the identical corresponding locations on its window of the printer driver's displayed print options. Any changes made to the display of this window on the Host Computer as a result of these instructions would result in a refreshed image of this window being sent to the portable device 18 to be displayed on its screen. When the user is satisfied with the print options selected and clicks on the "OK" icon on the screen of the portable device 18, a message is sent to the Host computer which enters "OK" in the identical corresponding location on its window of the printer driver's displayed print options. The print option window disappears and a refreshed image of the document appears on the screen of the Host Computer, and an image of this is sent to the portable device to be displayed. The application program running in the Host Computer 1 sends the data to be printed to the printer driver software 21, which transforms this data to a language the printer can understand. Hence, this data to be printed is then sent by the printer driver software 21 to the port 22 on the Host Computer 1, which supports two-way communication with any printer connected to port 22, but this data transfer is intercepted by software 25 which diverts it to the port 23 on the portable device 18. The software 25 basically transports the port 22 on the Host Computer 1 to the port 23 on the portable device 18, so that the printer driver software 21 believes it is communicating with port 22 on the Host Computer 1, whereas it is actually communicating with port 23 on the portable device 18. The software 25

interacts with another software 29 in the portable device 18, to support a two-way communication between the port 23 and the printer 24 as data is transferred back and forth between the printer driver 21 and the printer 24.

5 In another embodiment of the invention, the print command is executed by the user 3 of Fig. 6, from the portable device 18. A print icon is selected from the display screen of the portable device, and the location of the selected print icon on the display screen is sent as a message to the Host Computer 1, which has a mapped layout of the portable devices' display
10 screen and determines that a print command has been executed. The Host Computer 1 initiates the printer driver software 21, which brings up a window displaying various print options for the user to make selections. An image of this window is sent from the Host Computer 1 to the portable device 18 to be displayed on its screen. The user would then click on
15 various parts of the image on the display screen and a message is sent each time to the Host Computer informing of the click locations, and the Host Computer would input these clicks in the identical corresponding locations on its window of the printer driver's displayed print options. Any changes made to the display of this window on the Host Computer as a
20 result of these instructions would result in a refreshed image of this window being sent to the portable device 18 to be displayed on its screen. When the user is satisfied with the print options selected and clicks on the "OK" icon on the screen of the portable device 18, a message is sent to the Host computer which enters "OK" in the identical corresponding location on its
25 window of the printer driver's displayed print options. The print option window disappears and a refreshed image of the document appears on the screen of the Host Computer, and an image of this is sent to the portable device to be displayed. The application program running in the Host Computer 1 sends the data to be printed to the printer driver software 21,

which transforms this data to a language the printer can understand. Hence, this data to be printed is then sent by the printer driver software 21 to the port 22 on the Host Computer 1, which supports two-way communication with any printer connected to port 22, but this data transfer is intercepted by software 25 which diverts it to the port 23 on the portable device 18. The software 25 basically transports the port 22 on the Host Computer 1 to the port 23 on the portable device 18, so that the printer driver software 21 believes it is communicating with port 22 on the Host Computer 1, whereas it is actually communicating with port 23 on the portable device 18. The software 25 interacts with another software 29 in the portable device 18, to support a two-way communication between the port 23 and the printer 24 as data is transferred back and forth between the printer driver 21 and the printer 24.

In another embodiment of the invention, in accordance with Fig. 7, the portable device may be another computer 27 connected to a dedicated modem 28, which receives data from the modem 26 on the Host Computer 1. The computer 27 is a simple terminal with no operating system running in it, similar to the portable device 18. This embodiment allows the user to interface the computer 27 with a variety of peripheral devices 24 through a similar port 23 which may be the same as the standard port 22 or a compact version, or a wireless interface. For demonstration purposes, the peripheral device 24 will be a printer connected to port 23 on the computer 27. Hence, when a user wishes to print a viewed document on the computer 27, a print command is executed by the computer 27, and a print message is sent to the Host Computer 1, which instructs the Host Computer that a print command has been executed by the computer 27. The Host Computer 1 initiates the printer driver software 21, which brings up a window displaying various print options for the user to make

selections. An image of this window is sent from the Host Computer 1 to the computer 27 to be displayed on its screen. The user would then click on various parts of the image on the display screen and a message is sent each time to the Host Computer informing of the click locations, and the Host Computer would input these clicks in the identical corresponding locations on its window of the printer driver's displayed print options. Any changes made to the display of this window on the Host Computer as a result of these instructions would result in a refreshed image of this window being sent to the computer 27 to be displayed on its screen. When the user is satisfied with the print options selected and clicks on the "OK" icon on the screen of the computer 27, a message is sent to the Host computer which enters "OK" in the identical corresponding location on its window of the printer driver's displayed print options. The print option window disappears and a refreshed image of the document appears on the screen of the Host Computer, and an image of this is sent to the computer 27 to be displayed. The application program running in the Host Computer 1 sends the data to be printed to the printer driver software 21, which transforms this data to a language the printer can understand. Hence, this data to be printed is then sent by the printer driver software 21 to the port 22 on the Host Computer 1, which supports two-way communication with any printer connected to port 22, but this data transfer is intercepted by software 25 which diverts it to the port 23 on computer 27. The software 25 basically transports the port 22 on the Host Computer 1 to the port 23 on the computer 27, so that the printer driver software 21 believes it is communicating with port 22 on the Host Computer 1, whereas it is actually communicating with port 23 on the computer 27. The software 25 interacts with another software 29 in the computer 27, to support a two-way communication between the port 23 and the printer 24 as data is transferred back and forth between the printer driver 21 and the printer 24.